



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 17, 2020

CONTACT:

Melaney Arnold – 217-558-0500

Covid.media@illinois.gov

Public Health Officials Announce First Illinois Coronavirus Disease Death

Officials closely monitoring outbreak at long-term care facility in DuPage County

CHICAGO – The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) today announced the first death of an Illinois resident who tested positive for coronavirus disease (COVID-19). The individual was a Chicago resident in her 60s who tested positive earlier this month and had contact with a known COVID-19 case.

"I am deeply saddened by the news that we've dreaded since the earliest days of this outbreak: the first COVID-19 related death in Illinois," said Governor JB Pritzker. "All of Illinois stands with this patient's family and loved ones in mourning her loss and honoring her memory. May her memory be a blessing. There are going to be moments during the next few weeks and months when this burden feels like it is more than we can bear – this is one of those moments, but we will get through this together."

IDPH announced this past weekend the first resident in a long-term care in Illinois to test positive for COVID-19. Following aggressive testing at the facility, IDPH has now confirmed an additional 21 cases at the facility, 17 residents and four staff.

"In addition to the death we are sad to report today, we are also reporting an outbreak of COVID-19 in a long-term care facility," said IDPH Director Dr. Ngozi Ezike. "Residents in nursing homes are our most vulnerable population and we are doing everything we can to protect them. We may see cases in other long-term care facilities, which is why it is so important that we all do our part to reduce possible exposure in the community to those who go in and out of these facilities as they provide care to resident."

Updated guidance for nursing homes:

- Restrict all visitation except for certain compassionate care situations, such as end of life residents
- Restrict all volunteers and non-essential health care personnel (e.g., barbers)
- Cancel all group activities and communal dining
- Implement active screening of residents and health care personnel for fever and respiratory symptoms

Additional guidance for long-term care facilities is on the [IDPH website](#).

Find us on Facebook at [Facebook.com/IDPH.Illinois](https://www.facebook.com/IDPH.Illinois) or follow us on Twitter @IDPH

Nationally Accredited by PHAB



Currently, IDPH is reporting 160 cases in 15 counties in Illinois. Cases have occurred in ages 9 to 91. Cases by county can be found on the [IDPH website](#), as well as a list of [local health departments](#).

For information on actions you, your school, workplace, and community can take, please visit [Steps to Stay Safe from COVID-19](#). For general questions about COVID-19, call the hotline at 1-800-889-3931 or email dph.sick@illinois.gov.

###